


Some top comments from the video

81 replies



@GeorgeGzirishvili

17 hours ago (edited)

Usually your videos are pretty good, but I have to write a critical comment here.

This entire viewpoint is based on the premise that Russia would evolve differently if NATO didn't expand, when in fact, Russia had a military coup by Yeltsin, oligarchy that concentrated wealth and power in the hands of a few, natural resources that they could extract and sell without the need to develop the society and their skills, give them rights, democratize the politics, etc. (look up "resource curse"). This also ignores the geopolitics, the rise of China and its system. US and the West integrated China into the global economy, thinking that it'd eventually lead to democratization, which turned out to be false.

Furthermore, Yeltsin agreed with Clinton, and said that they wouldn't mind if Poland and Hungary joined. Putin also initially said that it was Ukraine's choice if they wanted to join and even expressed the interest to for Russia to join. Putin then was told that NATO's door was open, and if they wanted to join, they could apply for the membership and go through the procedure, just like the other members, but Putin expected a special treatment for Russia and said "We're not standing in the line with a bunch of countries that don't matter". His exact quote, look it up. Putin wanted Russia to join NATO in order to influence it and affect its decisions, not to be an equal partner with the other member states — because he never saw most of the members as Russia's equals.

We can talk all day that the US uses excessive force as well, but NATO isn't the US; it's an organization with its own charter and rules, and member states make decisions by engaging into discussions and negotiations. In fact, NATO's Secretary General is always European, and every European member state has an opportunity to have their candidate appointed.

It's also false that Russia didn't try to project their military power in the 90s, Transnistria and Abkhazia wars come to mind, which they funded and sent mercenaries to.


Also, Putin has repeatedly claimed that Ukraine is not a real country, and that it was created by the Bolsheviks, when in fact, Ukraine has existed under different names since the medieval times (Kievan Rus', Principality of Halych, Kingdom of Ruthenia (Galicia–Volhynia), Cossack Hetmanate, Zaporozhian Sich, Ukrainian People's Republic, West Ukrainian People's Republic, Ukrainian State). Putin views himself in the same light as Tsar Peter I, and he wants to restore the Russian Empire.


NATO is just a boogeyman for Russia to justify their military aggression, nothing more. Most people in Ukraine were against the NATO membership in 2014, and Obama and Merkel have practically blocked Ukraine and Georgia from becoming the members, but this wasn't enough for Russia, and they had to start a war. This war didn't start in 2022, it started in 2014. And even before that, Russia kept meddling into Ukraine's politics and tried to derail its EU integration. They're doing the same thing in Georgia right now because they want their power and hegemony back. We — the countries in the Eastern Europe — are not Russia, and we have agency, just like other countries. Is it too hard to understand?


The point of view you have presented here is just a result of overly reductionist thinking of some international relations scholars that lacks historical, geopolitical, socio-cultural, and economic insight. Explaining conflicts like this requires more interdisciplinary approach, and all I saw here was intellectual laziness akin to Mearsheimer's theories.

P.S.: I'm Georgian, BTW.

Show less


 846





Reply


25 replies





@LivingIronicallyinEurope

2 hours ago

It's not scary that he doesn't know what he's talking about, it's scary that the like to dislike ratio in this video is still positive. Johnny, you've cherry picked examples & completely left out extremely important context and framed it as le West bad, Russia is a poor bystander who didn't even have a chance but to act this way. I hate using this term, but your Western Privilege & ignorance is extremely showing through this video.


 100





Reply

9 replies





@KrisuNaNowo


1 day ago

Johnny I am a Pole and I feel a bit offended by what you present in here. You clearly did not dive deep enough into eastern blocks NATO history. Poland didn't get sucked into NATO by USA. USA did not want Poland to join initially. Poland basically blackmailed it's way into nato. When we got our independence back in 1918 we almost immediately got invaded by russia which didn't like the idea of independent Poland. On September 17th 1939 we got invaded again by them. After the IIWW Polish people where held hostage in the eastern block. No free speech, no democracy. Country was kept poor our eastern "friends". Many protests where suppressed with blood. Poland and other eastern countries joined nato out of fear, right fear as we can see. Russia is an expansionary empire. We had to show that to the western world, not the other way around.

Show less


 2.6K





Reply


77 replies





@thisin.

1 day ago

how is the baltics joining nato a "humiliation" to russia? are they entitled to the glory of conquering neighbors?


 1.7K





Reply

81 replies





@hawa7264


1 day ago

Unfortunately this video omits the perspective of eastern European countries during the NATO expansion phase. It was not only the US "locking in eastern European countries". They wanted to be in NATO. They had to deal with Russian aggression for centuries. The perspective of an effective protection against Russian imperialism was very promising.

There is a reason, why Ukraine was attacked - they are not part of NATO.


 10K





Reply

359 replies




@georgedemirev


1 day ago (edited)


As soon as I saw the title of the video, I knew what I was going to hear. This is a view that deprives Eastern Europeans of any agency and views them simply as pawns in a game to be passed around by the real players. Worse than that, is implicitly assumes that Russia has a right to an empire, a right to impose its will on people in countries like mine. Former Warsaw pact countries weren't added to NATO by the US - they joined on their own accord. The Bulgarian foreign minister cried tears of joy as its flag was raised over NATO's headquarters. I for one am thankful for the actions of people like him, as I don't have to worry about Shahed drones flying over my city as I go to sleep.

Finally a word of feedback to Johnny Harris - it may be better to platform actual people from the region when making such videos instead of US/UK academics. Also, it would have been helpful to disclose that prof Sakwa is also employed by the Higher School of Economics in Moscow and by Moscow State University, which might help the viewer judge his claims of objectivity at [25:23](#)

Show less

 1.4K





Reply

25 replies